

Asbury Theological Seminary ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange

Syllabi

eCommons

1-1-2002

MB 810 Advanced Missiological Anthropology

Michael A. Rynkiewicz

Follow this and additional works at: <http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi>

Recommended Citation

Rynkiewicz, Michael A., "MB 810 Advanced Missiological Anthropology" (2002). *Syllabi*. Book 1177.
<http://place.asburyseminary.edu/syllabi/1177>

This Document is brought to you for free and open access by the eCommons at ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. It has been accepted for inclusion in Syllabi by an authorized administrator of ePLACE: preserving, learning, and creative exchange. For more information, please contact thad.horner@asburyseminary.edu.

Instructor: Michael A. Rynkiewicz

Room: Beeson Centre, BC 322

Time: Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:00-2:15 pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This is an advanced course about various histories of the development of anthropology as it relates to Christian mission. The class will follow a historical approach to successive schools of thought in anthropology. We want to take a critical perspective on anthropological theories for several reasons. Anthropology has played a part in shaping various modern and post-modern worldviews in the West. In particular, the projects of cultural relativism and cultural pluralism stem directly from anthropology. Anthropology has also been implicated in the politics of colonialism, neo-colonialism and contemporary global capitalism. A critical view of anthropology as it relates to theology will lead us to our main concern, and that is missiology. There will be a conscious effort in our course to maintain a dialogue between anthropology, theology and missiology. Our goal is to gain insights about missiological issues and concerns.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To *read* all the material, attend all lectures, and participate in all class discussions.
2. To be able to *dialogue* about the main points which will be raised in lecture and readings.
3. To *develop skills in analyzing* mission issues from anthropological, theological and missiological perspectives.
4. To *develop skills in interpreting* the meaning of mission issues.
5. To *develop skills in applying* Biblical and cultural understandings to resolve mission problems and to make and execute mission plans.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Texts:

1. *The Study of Culture* (Rev. 1987) -L. L. Langness
2. *The Human Enterprise* (1987) - James Lett
3. *Anthropological Theory* 2nd ed. (2000) - R. J. McGee and R. L. Warms (eds.)
4. *Anthropological Reflections on Missiological Issues* (1994) - Paul Hiebert
5. *Eternal World: Changing World* (1984)- Harvie M. Conn
6. *The Church and Cultures: New Perspectives in Missiological Anthropology* (1988) – Louis J. Luzbetak

These texts will be read in parallel rather than sequentially. Something will be lost in terms of a particular author's development of an argument. However, something will be gained by placing several authors' narratives side-by-side for comparison. Through comparison, we will be in a position to offer a more informed critique of the ideas that are presented.

Langness' book is a straightforward history of theory in anthropology by an anthropologist who has worked in the Highlands of Papua New Guinea. We will follow its outline, for the most part.

Lett's book is more selective, reflective and critical of anthropological paradigms. We will place his essays alongside certain sections of *Langness'* book.

McGee and Warms' collection is invaluable (and costs a lot) because it includes primary materials; that is, articles written anthropologists working within the various paradigms of anthropological theory. These will allow us to interact directly with various strands of anthropological thought.

Hiebert's book will help us reflect on the missiological implications of the findings of anthropology. We will read this book particularly at the beginning of the course, when we consider the relationship between anthropology and missiology, and at the end, when we try to sum up what we have found.

Conn's book gives us the idea of a *trialogue* (the addition of another voice to a *dialogue*) between theology, anthropology and mission (or missiology, to complete the theme). We will read this book, as *Hiebert's*, mostly at the beginning and at the end of the course.

Luzbetak's book is one of those "classics" in the field of missiological anthropology. It will help us make the connections and apply our findings.

Assignments:

1. *Critical Reflection Papers.* There will be ten papers due at the beginning of the week crystallizing the themes from reading for discussion. These will be a great aid to you and the class as they will prepare you for the week's work. The papers should begin with a single sentence describing the anthropological theory that is the topic of the week. This opening sentence should be followed by a list of the main assumptions or propositions of this particular school of thought. The final paragraph should suggest how these assumptions relate to theology and missiology.

These papers should be two to three pages, single spaced, and are due on the following schedule: (Note: these are of no use if they are turned in late).

September 10:	A Science of Culture.
September 17:	Cultural Evolutionism.
September 24:	Historicism.
October 1:	Functionalism, or Culture Change.
October 8:	Culture and Personality.
October 15:	Cultural Ecology, or Neo-Evolutionism.
October 22:	Structuralism, or Symbolic Anthropology.
October 29:	Ethnoscience, or Cognitive Anthropology.
November: 5:	Behavioural Evolutionism.
November 12:	Post-Modern Anthropology.

2. *Research Paper.* Your research project in this course is to take a particular theoretical perspective (e.g., symbolic interactionism, structuralism, functionalism, cultural materialism, diffusion, etc.); or a particular anthropological concept (e.g., culture, comparative method, cultural configuration, ethnohistory, cultural ecology, functional integration, kinship, magic, myth, psychic unity, social structure, revitalization, acculturation, innovation, etc.); or an anthropologist and his/her writing (e.g., Marvin Harris, Morris Opler, Julian Steward, Ruth Benedict, Bronislaw Malinowski, Clifford Geertz, Mary Douglas, Victor Turner, David Bidney, Ralph Linton, Edward Sapir, Alfred Kroeber, Ward Goodenough, Homer Barnett, Margaret Mead, E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Rodney Needham, etc.), and apply the insights from that perspective, concept, or person to one or more missiological problems.

Think smart. Pick an area or theory that is new to you so you can learn something new, but also use this as an opportunity to inform some aspect of your dissertation research if you are a D. Miss or a Ph.D student.

Your end product for this exercise will be a paper (ten to fifteen pages, single-spaced) that will be made available for class members to photocopy. I will be happy to critique and provide feedback on an early draft of your paper. Be prepared, as well, to make an oral presentation to the class of a summary of your thinking.

The following deadlines apply to your paper:

October 01 -Selection and approval of your topic
November 05 -Complete outline of your paper.
December 05 -Final draft due.

3. *Final Exam.* The final exam will involve essay questions and will be designed to give you a chance to reflect on and demonstrate what you have learned in this class.

COURSE EVALUATION

50% Class preparation papers (10 papers @ 5% each)
25% Research Paper
25% Final Exam

COURSE GRADING

The unit of credit is a semester hour, which is defined as one hour of classroom work per week for one semester, or its equivalent. The 4.00 point system is used to compute grade point standing. The grading system is:

A	4.00	Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives.
B	3.00	Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives.
C	2.00	Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives.

D	1.00	Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives.
F	0	Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives.

INCOMPLETE WORK

The official end of each term is 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the examination schedule. This hour is the deadline for handing in all course work. Each instructor may set an earlier deadline for submission of any or all course work. The student must petition the faculty person involved and the student's advisor for permission to receive an "I" at the end of the semester.

A grade of "I" denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as "F."

Incomplete grades shall be removed one calendar month prior to the close of the following semester unless an earlier date is designated by the Office of the Chief Academic Officer on the individual petition. If the work is not completed by the time designated, the "I" shall be changed to an "F" unless a passing grade can be given based on work already completed or unless special permission is granted by the Chief Academic Officer.

Professors are required to give either a grade or an "I," if approved, to each student registered for credit in a course. Students with Incompletes in two or more classes will not be allowed to enroll in a new semester or term without permission from their Dean.

OFFICE HOURS

Office hours will be Wednesday 1:30-3:30 p.m. It is best to make an appointment in advance, but you may check during hours to see if others have not taken a time slot. Other times may be available by appointment. My office is in the ESJ School on the third floor of the McPheeters Centre, Room 308. Telephone: 858-2218